

Tashama Farm
Surfside Road
Nantucket
Nantucket County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-943

HABS
MASS
10-NANT
58-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

TASHAMA FARM

HABS

MASS

10-NANT

58

Location: On west side of Surfside Road, (about 1½ miles from Main and Orange Streets), Nantucket, Massachusetts

Present Owner: Barbara C. MacLean

Present Occupant: Barbara C. MacLean

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement of Significance: Stately mansion built by a prosperous whaling merchant.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- ca. 1800 - Built by Levi Starbuck on west side of Fair Street next north to the present three-story "Ships Inn" which was built by his son Captain Ohed Starbuck in 1831.
- 1831 - Moved to present location by Levi Starbuck
- 1849 - Inherited by his daughter, Eliza Starbuck Coffin. She and her husband, Henry Coffin, purchased from the other heirs of Levi Starbuck their share of "the Farm with all buildings, stock, etc."
- 1858 - Edward Hammond bought from Eliza and Henry Coffin.
- 1871 - Henry F. May bought from Susan H. Hammond, widow of Edward Hammond.
- 1872 - Willaim W. McIntosh bought land and buildings from Henry F. May for \$1340.
- 1900 - Cornelius H. Shaver purchased property.
- 1901 - Mattie E. Coffin bought.
- 1910 - Gustavus L. Lawrence, owner.
- 1915 - Dr. John S. Grouard and George E. Grimes bought from Gustavus L. Lawrence.
- 1928 - George E. Grimes bought Grouard share from his widow, Ruth L. Grouard.
- 1945 - Tashama Farm Inc., Ralph H. Lindsay, Treas., bought from George E. Grimes.
- 1947 - Ralph Howe bought.
- 1949 to date - Barhara C. MacLean

(Abstract: Records at Registry of Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts)

2. Date of erection: About 1800. It would seem probable that the house was moved away to make room for Levi Starbuck's son, Captain Obed, to build his mansion next south. Later a barn was built on the site where the house had stood.
3. Architect: Unknown
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: The house is structurally much as originally built at its former location, - square in shape with a chimney on each of the four corners and a large cupola or belvedere above the second story.

Tradition has it that there were always two small gardens beside the front steps, where yellow roses grew.

A large barn was added after it was moved, as well as a shop with "a swing in it and a barrel of hardtack."

5. Alterations and additions: Modernization, but little basic change has taken place.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: Levi Starbuck was an older brother of Joseph Starbuck, the rich oil merchant who built the famous three brick houses on Main Street. Levi was a member of the firm of Joseph Starbuck and Co. which built try-works, candle bouse, storage buildings and sheds for their very prosperous oil business on New Dollar Lane in 1807.

The Tashama Farm building was moved in 1831 from Fair Street to the outskirts of town to be used as a farm supplying produce for the family of Levi Starbuck's daughter, Mrs. Henry Coffin at 75 Main Street, where Levi Starbuck eventually moved to spend his remaining years. The farm was called "Spring Gardens" and a farmer and his family were installed to run the place. It was also used as a play resort for the grandchildren who were said to have "had great good times there." In 1858 it was decided to sell Spring Gardens and build a summer seaside home at Siasconset, as all the friends and relatives were doing.

Under new ownership the name of the property was changed to Tashama Farm. Benjamin Tashama was known as the last sachem of Nantucket as well as the greatest chief of his tribe, being a good and worthy man, an esteemed preacher and a successful schoolmaster. He died in 1770.

In 1875 Tashama Farm under the ownership of William W. McIntosh advertised in the local paper that they were raising five acres of green peas for sale that season.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Excellent photograph on calendar published by Inquirer and Mirror, 1938

Note: No views of building when it was on Fair Street have been found to date.

2. Bibliography: Memoirs of Mrs. Mary Coffin Carlisle, typescript in the Collection of Everett V. Crosby, owned by Marie M. Coffin, Nantucket, Massachusetts.

Prepared by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin
Nantucket, Massachusetts
June, 1968

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared for the Historic American Buildings Survey project on Nantucket, Massachusetts. They are part of a continuing HABS comprehensive survey of the early architecture and urban design of Nantucket financed by a grant from the Nantucket Historical Trust.

The project was under the general supervision of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Historical information was provided by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin of Nantucket, Massachusetts. Photographs are by Jack E. Boucher of Linwood, New Jersey, and Cortlandt V. D. Hubbard of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The material was edited for deposit in the Library of Congress by Mrs. Constance Werner Ramirez, July 1971.